

to hear about another 'marginal' world locale where country music was part of a negotiation of the 'global' and the 'local'. I was not disappointed, either in the information that Smith provides, nor in the way that he shapes the stories he tells.

For a reader (such as myself) almost entirely ignorant of Australian history, this book serves as an informative sketch of major events and trends as they pertain to popular culture and music-making. Smith provides a wealth of detail in his historical narratives, such as in his linking of performance venues and the nature of folk-revival performance practice. While he mentions his involvement as a performer and member of the communities he discusses in the book, Smith does not cite or otherwise mention the insider experiences that inform his writing. Although this book is a history, it is in many ways a richly personal and critical account and the moments where Smith opines or generalises would be stronger with a more overt articulation of his personal experiential authority.

The tone of the book as a whole does provide a sense of Smith's personal voice and positionality. The writing is engaging and clear, jargon is rare and the thread of Smith's thought is easily followed through the volume. Smith succeeded in keeping my interest as he balanced historical detail (such as the succession of ruling parties in the last decades of Australian government) and historiographic summary, including case study specifics as well as large-scale surveys that cover Australia's history and the background of Australian music-making.

In light of recent research into music 'scenes' and 'milieux', Smith's emphasis on the notion and substance of 'community' is notable. Smith draws from Benedict Anderson's well worn phrase the idea of 'imagined community', posing folk and country as modes of imagination for Australian music-makers. Smith wrestles with the intercultural/international dynamics intrinsic to non-US country (and folk), finding that '... these musical genres provide people with frameworks to think about the various tensions in contemporary Australian experience – between past and present, between country and city, between indigenous and settler claims to the land, between Anglo-Australians and non-British immigrants, between a shared national culture and multicultural diversity, between local national experience and global and international obligations' (p. 196).

This quote provides a list of the major issues that Smith deals with through this volume. His treatment of folk and country with regard to the international 'folk' movement, class and indigeneity provides information and analysis useful not only for those interested in Australia. Smith's elegant presentation of Australian folk and country is an exemplar for a study of 'local music' and how this activity fits into larger networks of music and people, and places.

Lee Bidgood

University of Virginia, USA

Stéréo. Sociologie Comparée des Musiques Populaires: France/G.B. Edited by Hugh Dauncey and Philippe Le Guern. Puceul and Paris, France: Mélanie Seteun and IRMA éditions, 2008. 270 pp. ISBN: 978-9216668-13-0
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At first sight, this book seems to have a peculiar starting point. In its very title, it proposes to compare sociological works on popular music from France and the UK.

However, upon opening the book and going through the introduction, one understands that it is much more a 'confrontation' or a 'dialogue at a distance' than a comparison. In their opening chapter, editors Hugh Dauncey and Philippe Le Guern illustrate the contrasts between the two places, highlighting on the one hand the fact that music has played a greater role in daily life in the UK and on the other hand that differences in academic hierarchies place French researchers in a more difficult context, where popular music still is an 'illegitimate' object of study. In short: 2–0 to the UK.

Stéréo is divided into seven chapters, each chapter presenting one text by a French academic and one from a UK academic. The stereophonic composition of the book is an interesting way of presenting this collection of essays, as it presents two separate channels that sometimes fit together, but at other times don't. When reading all the chapters dedicated to the French milieu (with one exception), one is struck by their relative homogeneity as detailed surveys about studies on popular music. In contrast, it is possible to read the chapters that deal with the UK situation as studies of larger issues and concepts. For example, the first chapter is dedicated to history in popular music studies. The French context appears to have a lack of stories about popular music, while the UK displays an overwhelming plurality and continued prominence of these stories. For G r me Guibert and Le Guern, French popular music studies have no 'academic' history, apart from the many difficulties that academia itself has brought to their historiography. For Simon Frith, the UK is overburdened with discourses about the progress (or lack thereof) of music since the 1950s. With the exception of stories about and from the music industries, these discourses are in fact describing a decline in popular music. The surprising quantity of footnotes – 91 – in Guibert and Le Guern's chapter, as compared to the relatively scarce amount of them – 16 – in Frith's piece, is one clue that the tone is somehow different in these chapters.

This tendency is also noted in the chapter dedicated to genres. From a large survey of French academic research, Fabien Hein describes the way academics have treated and defined the three most common genres in scholarly works: rock, techno and rap – allotting himself a few shortcuts in these genres to include or exclude some studies from his large categories. Simon Warner describes the important space occupied in the UK by the distinction between pop and rock, and the many slippages between these two genres. If Hein questions the importance of some genres in academia, Warner looks more at their empirical place. This type of distance is an exemplar of the two stereophonic channels throughout the book: on one side, detailed surveys of academic research and on the other, the ideas that populate it.

The other chapters present the same kind of stereophonic structure. In the chapter about politics, Martin Cloonan describes the transformations of the UK political environment when the Labour Party began to promote the music industries as one of the foremost examples of the creative industries. Philippe Teillet tries to survey the distinctive processes that are implicated in the many French state interventions in culture. Dominique Sagot-Duvaurox underlines that, in a French context, this relationship between politics and music industries is also felt in academia through the impetus given by the state to produce studies of the music economy. Mike Jones takes issue with the notion of 'economy' of music itself, and describes the necessity of understanding this phenomenon beyond the 'numbers', as an economy of signs and of senses. Herv  Glevar c and Mark Percival try to make sense of the importance of media. Glevar c's piece deals with the multiplication of French

radio stations and the redistribution of listeners that this entailed. Percival takes on Keith Negus' definition of mediation to describe the way that radio, television and the written press interact with popular music production, consumption and understanding.

In the chapter dedicated to the 'public' of popular music, Philippe Le Guern and Hugh Dauncey present one of the only moments of 'unison' between the two channels of this book. While Le Guern describes the importance of Bourdieu's theory of distinction in thinking about the consumers of popular culture as well as some new concepts and ways of thinking opened up since 2000, Dauncey presents an academic survey of three of the most common ways of thinking about music fans. The last chapter is about 'scenes' and looks at some local musical practices from the perspective of their relationships to a specific place. Guibert presents three examples of French cities where a 'scene' has developed, while Josie Robson – the only woman represented in the book – presents a feminist perspective on the Sheffield music scene.

This book is a technology of spacing that, even while questioning some preconceived notions about popular music studies, contributes to the affirmation of a certain national specificity through the compiled literature and the claim of some differences of contexts. It is also about the spacing of popular music studies through the constant reference to (or absence of) necessary international connections (read: USA as the 'international' other). The journeys of some of the musical products and the analytical concepts across borders – from the French context over to the UK and then back to France (or in the other direction) – are surprisingly absent except for a very few mentions, as are references to the many interrelations between the two realities, giving the reader a sense that they are living completely separate from each other with almost no interaction. While presenting some disparities between the two channels represented, the stereophonic construction of this book represents an excellent introduction for students to the body of popular music studies in France and to some of the larger issues from the popular music studies literature of the UK. A special mention should also be made of Emmanuel Parent who translated all the works from the UK scholars into French – something which is all too rare an activity.

Martin Lussier

Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada

***Estudios Sobre la Obra de Astor Piazzolla*. Edited by Omar García Brunelli. Buenos Aires: Gourmet Musical Ediciones, 2008. 304 pp. ISBN-13: 978-987-22664-2-4 doi:10.1017/S0261143010000188**

In recent decades, the alluring sounds of Astor Piazzolla's *nuevo tango* have captivated international musicians and audiences. Unfortunately, there are only a few notable and internationally scattered sources relating to the academic study of the Argentine composer and *bandoneonista*. With *Estudios sobre la obra de Astor Piazzolla*, Omar García Brunelli remedies the problem of accessibility and fills in this scholarly gap. Covering a broad spectrum of musicological topics, this book is a compilation of both previously published and new articles in Spanish dating from 2000–2008, authored by scholars from North and South America as well as Europe.